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1 May 1969

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR

SUBJECT: GMAIC Reassessment of SS-9 Characteristics

1. GMAIC's reassessment of SS-9 characteristics (attached) will presumably be "noted" by USIB and disseminated tomorrow.

2. We have no quarrel with the technical findings in GMAIC's memorandum. We note, however, that the only test firings to date of the SS-9 with heavy warhead have been to a range which equates to one against the US of about 4,700 nautical miles. This would be insufficient to reach US targets from present SS-9 deployment complexes. We think it doubtful that Soviet military commanders would wish to deploy a weapon for use against Minuteman on the basis of maximum but untested capabilities. Still less would they wish to place much dependence on it. Their other missiles have had range to spare, and they have been tested to full range.

3. None of this runs contrary to GMAIC's memorandum; it is a supplementary consideration. It raises some difficult problems for this year's 11-8. We see no convenient way to deal with the matter at the moment, but the Board thought that in view of current controversies you should at least be aware of the situation.

4. I have talked to Jack Smith, and he agrees.

/s/

ABBOT SMITH
Director
National Estimates

Attachment:
USIB-D-33.4/46

cc: DDI
Chairman GMAIC

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